

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 15 and 17-21 will be active in the application subsequent to entry of this Amendment.

Responsive to the issues raised in the outstanding Official Action, attached is a substitute specification (without claims) as well as a further copy of the substitute specification marked to show changes. With these submissions it is believed that the examiner's concerns expressed in item 2 of the Official Action have been overcome.

With regard to the claims, claim 15 has been allowed, claim 11 indicated to contain allowable subject matter and the remaining claims rejected. With the examiner's comments in mind, the subject matter of claim 11 has been incorporated into claim 10 and, for convenience, now appears as new claim 17.

Previous claims 12-14 are carried forward as new claims 18-20 and depend, directly or indirectly, from new claim 17.

Previous claim 16 has been revised in the same manner as previous claim 10 and now appears as new claim 21.

By these changes, all of the claims in the application under review are either allowed or contain allowable subject matter either directly or by virtue of their dependencies.

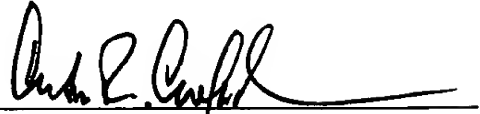
Accordingly, the rejections set out in items 4-6 of the Official Action have been resolved. For these reasons entry of this Amendment and allowance are solicited. If there is any reason why this Amendment does not place the application in condition for allowance, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone.

SANTOKI et al
Appl. No. 09/976,296
February 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

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